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State BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH - ANALYSIS: July 23, 1980

1. IRAN: PARLIAMENT OPENS AND THE CLERICS DOMINATE IT

The Majlis (parliament) has been formally established with a strong show of force by its clerical faction. At the same time, Khomeini has urged an even tougher approach in enforcing Islamic precepts throughout the government. Those developments make the appointment of a Prime Minister acceptable to the hard-line clerics inevitable, and a confrontation between them and President Bani-Sadr over that appointment likely.

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Khomeini, in a speech on July 20, said that "the Majlis must be 100 percent religious" and that the ministers must be "100 percent revolutionary and ideologically motivated." The first test of these orders will come following Bani-Sadr's nomination of the Prime Minister, which is due within the next few days. Competition for appointment as Prime Minister has centered on Minister of Transportation Kalantari (the IRP candidate) and Minister of Culture and Higher Education Habibi (Bani-Sadr's candidate). More recently, Minister of Education Rajai has been rumored as a compromise candidate.

The Majlis has 270 seats, but because of incomplete elections and unaccepted credentials, only some 200-230 of those seats have been filled. Within that total, the strength of the clerics is so overwhelming that they will, as long as they remain united and Khomeini agrees, be able to determine what parliament considers and what it decides. The membership figures for the major factions testify to the dominance of the clerics:

- The Islamic Republican Party (IRP) and its allies: Its earlier claims had been for about 130 seats, but its candidate for Speaker, Ayatollah Rafsanjani, who was elected, got 146 votes. (Rafsanjani is a senior IRP member who has shown a firm hand as the acting Minister of Interior; he and Bani-Sadr have developed a sharp rivalry.) One of the key questions for the future, however, is just how united this large bloc will remain. Ayatollah Beheshti said that he cannot even now be sure of the support of all IRP members.
- Bani-Sadr's followers: We have no figures for this faction, but one of Bani-Sadr's closest associates received 20 votes in the Speaker's race.
- Followers of former Prime Minister Bazargan: Eleven members list their association with this group, and Bazargan received 12 votes for Speaker.
- The left: One member claims to represent the Mujaheddin, but, more significantly, the 20 members who joined in objecting to recent attacks against a Mujaheddin rally must have leftist leanings. A known leftist member received 15 votes in the race for Speaker.

State Department review completed